

NEW STUDENT INFORMATION



THE FIRST DAY OF SCHOOL

1. When is the first day of school?

School starts on Monday, August 17. School hours are from 7:40 until 2:40. Students can arrive as early as 7:10 and wait inside the designated area for their grade level.

2. What should students wear?

The dress code is listed in The Student Handbook, which students will receive at Fall Orientation August 13 and 14.

3. What school supplies should students bring for the first day of school?

A general school supply list is included in this mailing. School supplies can be placed in lockers during Fall Orientation.

4. Where are students dropped off and picked up?

Drop off and pick up areas are determined by grade level. Teachers and police officers direct traffic and assist students at crosswalks from 7:20-7:30 and from 2:40-2:50.

- Bus students are dropped off and picked up along the bus-loading circle located on the north side of the building. This circle is for bus traffic only.
- 5th and 6th graders are dropped off and picked up along the one-way drive located on the east side of the building. We ask that parents pull their vehicles as far forward as possible so that other cars may park behind them. The entrance to the one-way drive is from Larimore Avenue. The exit is 140th Street. Some 5/6 parents also drop off and pick up along 140th Street. Use the crosswalks!
- 7th and 8th graders are dropped off and picked up along the south side of Larimore Avenue. We ask parents to park along the south side of the street for safety.
- Families that transport multi-grade level children are encouraged to use Larimore Avenue between the parking lot and bus circle.

5. Where do students report on their first day of school?

From 7:10 until 7:30, students may enter the doors designated for their grade level.

- **5th graders** enter and wait seated inside the small east doors on the side of the building (facing 140th Street).
- **6th graders** continue to enter and wait seated inside the main doors (located near the large parking lot to the east).
- **7th graders** enter the north doors (also known as the bus doors) and wait seated in the gym bleachers.
- **8th graders** continue to enter the lower west patio doors (next to the cafeteria) and wait seated in the gym bleachers.



6. Where do students go at 7:30?

At 7:30 students will report to their lockers to put away their belongings. **Then they report to Bobcat Block to turn in any forms and listen to announcements.** Bobcat Block is a homeroom period that normally meets at the end of the day. However, the first two days of school students will start and end their day in Bobcat Block.

7. Do students go to their Odd-numbered classes or their Even-numbered classes?

The first day of school is considered DAY ONE or an “ODD Day” regardless of the calendar date. Students will attend only the odd-numbered classes on their schedule (Bobcat Block, periods 1, 3, 5, 7, and Bobcat Block again). During Period 1 students will have time to practice their locker combination. The purpose of this first day is to get students acquainted with their teachers and classmates as well as find their way around the building. (Note: On Tuesday, students will attend only the even-numbered classes: Bobcat Block, periods 2, 4, 6, 8, and Bobcat Block again).

8. What if students find a problem with their class schedule?

Students were placed in the classes they selected during registration. Placement in certain math, reading, and international language courses was based upon specific criteria and test scores. Changes to schedules cannot be made unless there was an error in math or reading placement according to the test data. Please contact our Assistant Principal, Ms. Vodehnal at Fall Orientation if you believe such an error has occurred.

9. What if students don't have any of their best friends on their team?

Adjusting to a new school typically takes 6 – 8 weeks, so give things some time. The computer randomly places students on teams so that students have an opportunity to meet new people and form additional friendships. After all, we have students at Buffett from almost every elementary school in the district, plus some coming from private schools. Middle school is a time of exploring interests and growing socially, emotionally, physically, and intellectually. Students may have opportunities to see old friends as well as make new friends by participating in our school activity program. Remember that everyone is “in the same boat.” Everyone wants to be accepted and have friends. Avoid forming quick opinions. Sometimes people are just quiet or shy and it takes a little extra effort to get to know them. A friendly smile and positive attitude can go a long way when meeting unfamiliar faces!

10. What are the procedures for dismissal at 2:40?

To insure smooth traffic flow, students exit the building using designated doors. Bobcat Block teachers escort their classes out at dismissal.

- Beginning at 2:35, the **5th and 6th graders** are escorted by homeroom teachers to their designated doors (either to the east or main doors). Students that ride the bus are then escorted by teachers to the lower level bus doors.
- At 2:38, all **7th graders** are escorted by teachers to the west doors adjacent to the track. Bus students then proceed on the sidewalk to the bus-loading circle.
- At 2:40, all **8th graders** are escorted by teachers to the west doors adjacent to the track. Bus students then proceed on the sidewalk to the bus-loading circle.



THE FIRST WEEK OF SCHOOL

1. What if students are tardy to class the first week of school?

Students have 4 minutes to pass to their next class. At Buffett, there are no passing period bells. Teachers dismiss students from class. Classical jazz music is played in the halls during passing periods and a tone will warn students when passing time is coming to an end. New students should not be overly concerned with being late to class the first week of school. Teachers are aware that new students are getting used to their lockers and the route to take during passing periods.

2. When do students get their textbooks and do they need to be covered?

Teachers will hand out textbooks during the first week of school. Textbooks need to remain covered throughout the school year to protect them from wear. Students will be assessed fines for excessive wear, damage, or loss of textbooks. Students are reminded to use only the textbooks assigned to them. Students can purchase book covers at local retail stores or create their own from paper grocery sacks, colorful gift wrapping paper, or wall paper samples.

✧ **Organizational Tip:** Use one color to cover books used on Odd Days and another color to cover books used on Even Days. Write the course title and class period on the spine.

3. What else will teachers go over the first week of school?

Teachers spend a great deal of time going over their classroom expectations and routine the first week of school. Classes will spend time discussing:

- ~ The Student Handbook.
- ~ Materials to bring to class.
- ~ Team policies on such topics as tardies, absences, late work, and after school Homework Hideaway.
- ~ How to use the Bobcat Student Planner (or Agenda).
- ~ How to access your assignments by calling the Homework Hotline or Buffett website.
- ~ Lunch time procedures.
- ~ Hall pass procedures.
- ~ Accessing staff in the Office, Health Room, Library, and Counseling Office.
- ~ When to bring instruments for Strings or Band.
- ~ When to bring gym clothes for 7th and 8th grade Physical Education classes.

4. What if students have to stay after school?

Students staying after school for sports, clubs, or Homework Hideaway should pass quickly to their meeting areas by 2:45. All other students should be exiting the building by 2:45. Bus students are reminded to sign up with their first teacher of the morning if they plan to take the late bus at 3:40 or 4:40. Bus students must be signed up by 9:00 a.m. in order to ride the late bus.



HOMEROOM / BOBCAT BLOCK ADVISORY PROGRAM

Bobcat Block Advisory is like “Homeroom.” Bobcat Block classrooms are arranged by grade level and are scheduled the last 20 minutes of the day. Students bring all of their belongings to take home (coat, backpack, Daily Planner) as they are escorted out by their Bobcat Block teacher at dismissal. Each day of the week has a specific activity in Bobcat Block.

- Mondays – Life skill and character development lesson. Students should plan to bring paper and a writing utensil.
- Tuesdays – D.E.A.R. Time (Drop Everything and Read). Students should plan to bring a reading book.
- Wednesdays – Parent Newsletters go home in backpacks. Students bring a D.E.A.R. book to read as materials are passed out.
- Thursdays - D.E.A.R. Time. Students should plan to bring a reading book or magazine.
- Fridays – Newsbowl or Team-Building Activity. (Newsbowl fosters discussion of current events).



WHAT OTHER AREAS OF THE BUILDING SHOULD STUDENTS BECOME FAMILIAR WITH?

The Main Office

Students stop by the office window for a variety of reasons.

- To deposit money into their lunch account.
- To check in after 8:00 a.m.
- To check out before 2:40.
- To check for an item in the Lost and Found.
- To visit the nurse in the Health Room.
- To make an appointment to see an administrator.
 - Dr. Kehrberg, Principal
 - Ms. Vodehnal, Assistant Principal & Data Administrator
 - Mrs. Holland, Assistant Principal & Activities Director
 - Mr. Alati, Assistant Principal & Athletic Director
 - Ms. Heineman, 7/8 Dean of Students
 - Mrs. Ziola, 5/6 Dean of Students

The Counseling Office

The Guidance Office is open from 7:30 until 3:40 each day. The counselors teach in the classrooms, provide brief response counseling, and offer discussion groups on topics like Divorce, Grief, and Stress Management. Counselors also meet with teachers each week to provide support for students on their assigned teams. Each counselor is assigned to a particular group of students and remains with them for all four years while they attend Buffett (see below). All four counselors teach guidance lessons in the classrooms bi-monthly throughout the year discussing a variety of life skill topics. As a result, students get to know all four counselors very well and are welcome to visit with any counselors on staff to discuss confidential issues.

Mrs. Meister – Assignment: Grade 5	Curriculum: Academic & Social Skill Development
Mrs. Lewandowski – Assignment: Grade 6	Curriculum: Academic & Educational Development
Ms. Comstock – Assignment: Grade 7	Curriculum: Career & Occupational Exploration
Mr. Thull – Assignment: Grade 8	Curriculum: Personal & Social Skill Development

PRIVATE COUNSELING SERVICES - Buffett also has a community counseling service contracted through Methodist Health Systems. Mrs. Mueller, our Community Counselor is available every other day for private therapy sessions with students (which can include their families) free of charge. Written parental consent is required to visit with Mrs. Mueller.

The Library

The Library is available to any student after school every day (except Mondays) until 3:30. Students must have a pass from a teacher or the librarian in order to use the library after school. Students may research a topic, use the computer, or check out library books. Computers should not be used for personal emailing or “surfing the net.” District Internet Policy Guidelines are strictly enforced.

BEFORE - SCHOOL ACTIVITIES



Free Breakfast Program

Food Service Hours are 7:10 – 7:25
Cafeteria closes at 7:30

We are pleased to offer our students the opportunity to eat breakfast in the cafeteria without charge. Breakfast lines are open from 7:10 until 7:25. Tables are designated for grades 5 / 6 or grades 7 / 8. Once students enter the cafeteria, they are to remain there until supervisors dismiss them to their lockers at 7:30.

Bus Students

Bus students coming in for breakfast may enter the building using the closest entrance (the bus / north doors). Students should check in with the morning supervisor then go directly to the cafeteria.

Students that Walk or Carpool

Beginning at 7:10, 7th or 8th grade students may come in for breakfast using the bus (north) entrance. Students should check in with the morning supervisor as they enter the building. Fifth or 6th graders that come in for breakfast should use the main (east) entrance to check in and then go down the 5/6 stairwell to the cafeteria.



Rise and Shine Reading Room

A004 Radio Broadcasting Room (lower garden level)
7:10 – 7:30

Students who wish to enjoy literature prior to school beginning each day may do so in an informal quiet environment at Buffett. Any student may bring a self-selected reading book to room A004 (located near the cafeteria) and read quietly beginning at 7:10. Once students enter the reading room, they are to remain there until supervisors dismiss them to their lockers at 7:30. Should the Rise and Shine Reading Room membership become too large for room A004, our 5th and 6th grade students may be moved to an alternate location in the library.

5th and 6th grade

Students coming in to read may enter the building using the main (east) entrance. Students should plan to show the supervisor at the entrance their reading material. This is their “admission ticket” to the Rise and Shine Reading Room. Students then go down the 5/6 stairwell to report directly to room A004 until 7:30.

7th and 8th grade

Students coming in to read may enter the building using the bus (north) entrance. Students should plan to show the supervisor at the entrance their reading material. This is their “admission ticket” to the Rise and Shine Reading Room. Students then go directly to room A004 until 7:30.



LUNCH TIME

The Buffett Magnet Middle School cafeteria fondly referred to as “The Buffett Buffet” serves hot lunches daily. The full lunch is a balanced meal consisting of a choice between two main dishes, vegetables, fruits, bread, and milk products. Instead of the main dish, students may opt for a deli sandwich, chef salad, or meat / peanut butter sandwich. Students may also bring their lunch from home and buy milk for 25 cents. Due to federal regulations, no commercial or fast food may be brought in by visitors during lunch (or breakfast). All POWERade / bottled water machines will be turned off during the school day.

Meals are paid for at the end of the food service line using student lunch accounts. Students memorize their lunch account numbers and punch in their number at the cashier station. All students are responsible for memorizing their lunch account number, or “student I.D. number.” **Student identification numbers** can be found on official documents created by the Omaha Public Schools such as mailing labels, report cards, class schedules, and school computer accounts. All students attending Omaha Public Schools continue to have the same number from kindergarten through twelfth grade so **students are encouraged to memorize this number prior to starting middle school.**

Deposits may be made to lunch accounts at any time. An envelope containing cash or a check may be delivered to the Buffett office any morning. Checks should be made out to “Alice Buffett Magnet Middle School” and the student’s name and account number should be written on the envelope as well as on the “memo” line of the check.

Additional Purchases

Students may also purchase additional snack items such as chips, cookies, ice cream treats, and fruit drinks. These optional snacks are in addition to the regular lunch prices and financially support our free breakfast program. Most snacks range from 50 cents to \$1.25. Sometimes when snacks are offered, youngsters overindulge in purchasing multiple snacks, barely touching their lunches and quickly running through the money in their lunch account. To prevent this, parents may “opt their child out of snack item purchases” by completing a form in the Fall Orientation packet.



HOW DOES LUNCH WORK?

Teachers will announce the lunch schedule the first day of school. Lunch time lasts 30 minutes. We suggest students eat a full breakfast, as lunch time can be a long stretch from when alarm clocks go off in the morning.

Teachers escort students quietly to the cafeteria. Students from the same grade level eat close to the same time. Classes are assigned to various tables. Bobcats are expected to use good table manners at lunch, and abide by the following rules:

- Students should use the restroom and wash their hands prior to entering the cafeteria.
- Students are to sit at the tables assigned for their class. There is no special saving of seats for friends.
- Once a seat has been selected, there is no moving, or “table hopping.”
- All students should be made to feel included. This is a wonderful opportunity to meet new people.
- The cafeteria supervisors will direct students when it is time to move through the lunch line.
- Students should refrain from purchasing food for someone else using their lunch account.
- Once seated, students should raise their hand if they need assistance.
- Students are responsible for picking up after themselves and disposing of their trash / trays prior to dismissal.
- Classroom teachers line their students up and escort them quietly back to class when lunch is over.



LOCKERS

- **BEFORE SCHOOL STARTS** – We suggest that students memorize their locker combination before the first day of school. We encourage students NOT to write their locker combination on the outside of their notebooks, folders, or book covers. Locker combinations should be kept secret; not to be shared with even the best of friends! Note: Locker combinations can only be changed over the summer.
 - ✧ *Organizational Tip: We suggest that students write their locker combination in a secret place hidden in their daily planner, such as on the student’s date of birth.*
- **LOCKERS ARE CONVENIENT** – Lockers are conveniently located in the team areas. Students are not allowed to switch or keep their belongings in another student’s locker. Students may only use the locker assigned to them.
- **DECORATING THE INSIDE OF LOCKERS** – Please refrain from using tape, “sticky tak,” or stickers, as they take our navy paint off. Students may attach appropriate items to their locker using only decorative **magnets**. There are no outside locker decorations.
- **LOCKER SHELVES** – Lockers at Buffett are equipped with two shelves located at the top of the locker. If a student cannot reach the top shelf, some may opt to purchase a metal locker shelf from an area retail store. Metal locker shelves that sit at the bottom of the locker work well for extra organization. Avoid plastic locker shelves that place pressure on the sides of the locker. Students that share lockers should work together to divide the locker space equally.
 - ✧ *Organizational Tip: We suggest students designate a certain space for “Odd Day” materials and another shelf for “Even Day” materials.*
 - ✧ *Organizational Tip: When covering your textbooks be sure to write the course title and class period on the spine of the book. Then stack your books upright, with the spine showing like on a library shelf. This will save time during passing periods.*
- **STORAGE** – All bags must be put away in lockers before attending the first class of the day. Prevent locker jams by keeping coats, backpacks, and other supplies away from the edges of the locker.
 - ✧ *Organizational Tip: Coats or empty backpacks should be stored on the back hook or top shelf.*
- **PASSING PERIODS** – We encourage Bobcats to be polite. As students approach the lockers, they should say, “Excuse me I need to get to my locker please” rather than nudging through other students. Locker partners should hold the locker door open for one another to save time. Being courteous is a Buffett expectation.
- **LOCKER FRUSTRATIONS** – Rest assured, if students have trouble getting their locker open, we have a simple solution: go to class and inform the teacher. Staff members are here to help and some even carry locker keys for quick access!

- **CLOSING THE LOCKER** - For extra security, make sure the top and bottom of the locker is closed and spin the lock so it doesn't remain on the last number of the combination.
- **USING ANOTHER STUDENT'S BELONGINGS** – Bobcats respect personal property by not borrowing their locker partner's supplies without asking and by only using the textbooks assigned to them.
- **LOCKER ORGANIZATION** – Teams or Bobcat Block teachers plan locker clean out opportunities. Take advantage of this time to return library books and take graded papers home. With teacher permission, students that share lockers may want to spend time during homeroom on Fridays cleaning to keep their locker nicely organized for one another.



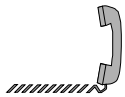
CLUBS AND ACTIVITIES

Buffett offers a variety of clubs and sports to their Bobcats. Listen to the daily announcements and check out Buffett's website to learn more information on fall sports such as tackle football, cross country, and volleyball. There will be an all school assembly in September to officially kick off Buffett's activity program. Club offerings may change year to year and are dependent upon adult sponsorship. An Activities Program booklet with all meeting times and locations will be sent home in September.



WEDNESDAY NEWSLETTERS & WEBSITE

Communication between school and home is very important at Buffett. Informational materials such as newsletters, reminders, and activity calendars are sent home every Wednesday. Daily announcements can also be found on our website at www.ops.org/buffett. The Buffett website, in addition to daily announcements, lists daily homework assignments, school lunch menus, school calendar updates, staff contact information, and P.T.O. news. In addition, we have a student newspaper and school newsletter that all students will receive.



HOMEWORK HOTLINE & ON THE WEB

561-6199

Students are responsible for making up any assignments, tests, labs, and projects missed due to absences. Each day our Homework Hotline is updated. Students may call this number after 3:30 p.m. and hear a list of the day's homework. Simply follow the instructions on the recording for your team! You may also access assignments on our website!

<http://www.ops.org/middle/buffett/>

(Click "Homework" on menu bar, then scroll down to click on your TEAM. Next, click on the date of the homework you need).